

## Islamic State (IS) in India

### Why in news?

\n\n

\n

- Indian intelligence agents have confirmed the arrest of an Islamic State (IS) operative.

\n

- This was ahead of a planned plot to bomb New Delhi.

\n

\n\n

### How is IS presence in India?

\n\n

\n

- The arrest throws the spotlight on the IS's presence in India.

\n

- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) and state police have so far arrested 75 individuals with alleged IS links.

\n

- The highest number is from Kerala (21), followed by Telangana (16), Karnataka (9), Maharashtra (8).

\n

- Other states include MP (6), Uttarakhand (4), TN (4), UP (3), Rajasthan (2), J&K (1) and WB (1).

\n

\n\n

### How does IS recruit?

\n\n

\n

- IS propaganda and recruitment depends largely on social media apps such as WhatsApp and Nimbus.

\n

- Recruiters and trainers use the Internet, the phone and one-on-one meetings for indoctrinating Indian youth.

- \n
- They then get them travel to Syria, Libya or Iraq.
- \n
- Of late, recruiters have been using the “dark web”.
- \n
- This is a class of Internet content that is not visible to general browsing and is not indexed by search engines.
- \n

\n\n

### **How have IS's activities in India been?**

\n\n

- \n
- So far, IS has not directly claimed responsibility for any attack in India.
- \n
- The 2014 blast on **Church Street, Bengaluru** was however allegedly triggered by an IS-linked individual.
- \n
- As per NIA reports, he had acted on directions from handlers in Syria associated with the IS.
- \n
- The target was Israeli tourists in Bengaluru.
- \n
- He was earlier with SIMI (Students Islamic Movement of India) and then Indian Mujahideen.
- \n
- IS is also suspected to be behind the low-intensity blasts on **Bhopal-Ujjain passenger train** in 2017.
- \n

\n\n

### **How is IS role in J&K?**

\n\n

- \n
- The security establishment believes that the IS does not have any defined organisational structure in J&K.
- \n
- 4 militants recently killed in South Kashmir belonged to Islamic State of Jammu and Kashmir (ISJK).
- \n
- However, this outfit is believed to have no organisational links with ISIS.
- \n

- ISJK recruits are mostly former operatives of other groups such as Hizb-ul Mujahideen and Lashkar-e-Toiba.

\n

\n\n

## **How does IS operate in India?**

\n\n

\n

- Bhatkal (Karnataka)-resident Shafi Armar is said to be highest-ranking IS operative in India.

\n

- He is designated a global militant by the United States.

\n

- Shafi Armar was earlier with the Indian Mujahideen.

\n

- He claims to have been tasked by IS chief al-Baghdadi to set up a Caliphate in India.

\n

- However, intelligence agencies doubt if he has a direct association with al-Baghdadi.

\n

- Officials suspect that Armar uses the name of ISIS on directions of Pakistan.

\n

- As, it is learnt that IS prefers Arab fighters for jihad and engages Indians mostly in administrative work.

\n

\n\n

## **What is the government's response?**

\n\n

\n

- In 2015, the Home Ministry notified Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) as a banned terrorist organisation.

\n

- This was under the provisions of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

\n

- It stated that ISIS was involved in radicalisation and recruitment of vulnerable youths.

\n

- Recently, the government included ISIS-K, also known as Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP) or ISIS Wilayat Khorasan.

\n

- This is a branch that is active in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

\n

\n\n

## **How is Afghanistan becoming significant?**

\n\n

\n

- The recently arrested Islamic State operative is an Afghan national.
- \n
- The IS is looking for new bases as its territory is shrinking in Iraq and Syria.
- \n
- Significantly, Afghanistan is one of the targeted countries.
- \n
- Afghanistan's Khorasan province, where many have migrated from Kerala, is being eyed.
- \n
- Notably, in 2016, 22 residents of Kerala, including 6 women and 3 children, reached an IS establishment in Afghanistan.
- \n
- Also, Pakistan-backed militant groups are suspected to use Afghanistan nationals to attack India in the name of the IS.
- \n
- In 2015, such groups had allegedly tried to make use of medical visas granted to Afghan nationals.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: Indian Express**

\n



**SHANKAR**  
**IAS PARLIAMENT**  
*Information is Empowering*